The Three Musketeers

By N. T. MACLEOD.

I made a trip to Calgary last year to take in the meeting of the pioneers with the hope of meeting the three remaining 1874 members of the old R.C.M. Police, Bob McCutcheon, Fred Bagley and Capt. Bill Parker. Unfortunately Bob was the only one of the three there. As he was the first one I had met, I shall write of him first.

BOB

In late 1882 or early 1883, Dr. DeVeber had left the R.C.M.P. and opened an office in what was known as the Ram Pasture built by Camoose in his Kay Corral.

The doctor and I used to afford assistance to the Rev. Geo. McKay from the Peigan Reserve on his occasional visits to the barracks on the island, he with his beautiful tenor voice and I with what might have been termed a fair average Peigan dog's howl.

Bob was then freighting from Medicine Hat and on one of his visits developed a beautiful toothache. As there was no resident dentist he came to the doctor for relief. DeVeber did his best but could not dig Mr. Tooth out. After standing all the punishment he could endure he would wander out for a little spiritual refreshment and return for more punishment. It being Sunday and I had no work to do I was appointed to the hard job of trying to hold his feet during the struggle.

Finally either the whiskey gave out or the doctor became exhausted and they declared it a draw. It was fortunate the proceedings stopped when they did as Fred Shaw came in from Cardston the following day, cracked the tooth and pulled the roots separately, when it was found they were so interlocked that had sufficient strength been used the whole jawbone would have had to come.

When I saw Bob in Calgary last year he was sitting with a daughter and was nearly blind. I said, "You don't remember me, Bob?" "No. What's your name?" "Macleod. Don't you remember the kid who held your feet when Dr. DeVeber tried to pull your tooth?" "Norman Macleod, yes."

I was glad I had the chance of again meeting him as shortly after my return to Lethbridge I saw the notice of his death in the Calgary Herald.

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FRED

I cannot recollect when I first met Fred Bagley, but I believe it was during the First World War when he was leaving Calgary as leader of the band.

He remains in my memory chiefly because of his description of their arrival at Whoop Up in 1874 as told by him in Scarlet and Gold.

I am afraid his description of the taking of Whoop Up does not agree with the historical records. In the first place the Commissioner Col. French, never saw Whoop Up. He did visit Fort Benton when the celebrated scout, Jerry Potts was hired to guide the police to Whoop Up and, after returning to their camp near the Sweet Grass Hills went east to, probably Dufferin, where he resigned, I think, in 1876, to be succeeded by Col. Macleod.

In the second place they were not received by any one legged man but by D. W. Davis who left the U.S. service at Fort Shaw and came to Whoop Up to work for Hamilton and Healy and worked for them during the building of Whoop Up. These facts I have from Mr. Davis himself. I started under him at old Fort Macleod Nov. 1, 1880, and continued with the firm until the business was sold to the Hudson Bay Co.

My own impression, which may not be correct is that Capt. C. E. Denny was in charge of the first police to visit Whoop Up.

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BILL

As with Fred, the date of my first meeting is hazy. I met Walter Huckvale one cold night at the Assiniboia Hotel, Medicine Hat. As the atmosphere, both liquid and otherwise was decidedly chilly, he suggested trying the Cypress Club, which we did. While I was signing the register, I heard a voice from the inner room, "Fifty Crees cut off from my men, etc." On entering, there was Capt. Bill holding forth to a crowd before a blazing fire in the big stone fire place. Working my way through the smoke to a place near the narrator, I listened to the finish of the story, which I managed to tie in with those who had heard the beginning.

It appeared that the captain had been on a patrol and was jumped by a bunch of about 50 Crees who managed to cut him off from his party. He started for home, but the Crees kept gaining on him so he ducked in a welcome coulee for about 200 yards, then turning into a smaller side coulee. After waiting some time and hearing nothing of the Crees he proceeded up the coulee intending to make a wide circle and thus avoid his friends, but found to his disgust there was no outlet so he had to return and at the opening into the large coulee met a reception party of 50 Crees.

"Well, you know what happened," said Bill.

Interested inquirer (probably English): "What did happen, Mr. Pahkah?" Bill: "Why they killed me, of course, you damn fool!"